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REVIEWS

ROBERT HERRICK: A Biographical and Critical Study. By F. W. Moorman. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head. New York: John Lane Co. 1910.

Professor Moorman has given us a good book. The known facts of Herrick's life and such surmise as the poems and contemporary records warrant occupy the first half of the volume. The second half is critical, and in it the author has not only sought to analyze the characteristics of the poet's genius, but has also, in a thoroughly scholarly manner, indicated Herrick's relations to his contemporaries and traced his indebtedness to his Elizabethan and classical predecessors.

For purposes of biography the material at our disposal has not grown since the days of Dr. Grosart's researches, and the present author, wisely respecting its limitations, has refrained from undue 'padding,' and has almost resisted the temptations of adding surmise to surmise, in spite of the provocative personal allusions of the poems. We know what we already knew,—and Professor Moorman has mastered the difficult art of making repetition palatable,—that Herrick was born in London in 1590, spent his early years at Hampton, went to some undetermined school, was apprenticed to his goldsmith uncle, grown tired of which he entered Cambridge in 1613 with a view to the law, wrote various merry begging letters to the aforesaid guardian uncle, who seems too churlishly to have doled out his nephew's own small estate, went thence to London, where 'sealed of the tribe of Ben,' he sought only to 'live merrily and trust to good verses;' then by some unexplained freak, though a fund of seriousness undoubtedly lay at the bottom of his Anacreontic humors, drifted churchwards and found himself in 'loathed Devon' and a prey to the 'warty incivility' of its inhabitants; was after eighteen years of mingled petulance and content ejected with the Commonwealth, restored with the Restoration, and twelve years later died within a few months of a poet of genius and temperament so strangely diverse from his own — John Milton.

Of no period of the poet's life are we permitted to gain as much knowledge as our legitimate curiosity craves, with this proved advantage, however, that we are thrown back upon the poems themselves to gain access to their author's prejudices and preferences, both, as lovers of the poet will admit, sufficiently pungent to constitute a revelation. It is interesting, of course, to know that Herrick's boyhood was passed in the midst of charming country surroundings, but the essential thing, after all, is to learn from the poems how the sights and sounds and smells of the country, its store of legend and quaint survival of ancient custom, were transmuted in the stream of his flowing fancy, and in what particular way the music of the birds and fragrance of the flowers found echo and reflection in his verse. In fact, what we do not gain from the poems is so meagrely presented in contemporary record that it is barely worth the having.

From the confessional of the verses, for example, we do not learn that the poet was ever an undergraduate at Cambridge, but biographical record carries us no further on our way, squeezing nothing more valuable out of his residence there than the few random letters of an impecunious fellow-commoner to a penurious uncle. For the Ben Jonson years in London—the years that shaped his genius—we must content ourselves with the same provoking dearth of material. And even when the naïve narrative of the poems provides us with the dazzling array of mistresses whom the most un-Puritanic of persons delights in dressing and undressing for our edification, the shrivelled meagreness of the documents will not allow us to hazard more than a guess as to whether Julia, Anthea, Perilla, and the rest are other than mere poetic exercises, and with difficulty permits to pious surmise that they date from the period while the poet was still an irresponsible layman.

I may exemplify the sanity and quiet humor of Professor Moorman's handling of his material by a quotation bearing upon these mistress lyrics:

"A more difficult point to determine is that of the reality, or unreality, of these many mistresses. Are they real women whom Herrick knew and paid court to, or are they dream-children,

created by a poet's fancy, and calling no man father? Mr. Edmund Gosse has discussed this matter at some length in his essay on Herrick in *Seventeenth Century Studies*, but most of the poet's editors have refrained from expressing any very definite opinion. Mr. Gosse refuses to believe in Perilla, Silvia, Anthea, and the *deæ minores*, but has a very real faith in Julia of the 'black eyes, double chin, and strawberry-cream complexion.' He thinks that she belonged to the poet's Cambridge years, and that she died before 1629. He even hints at a serious *liaison* between the poet and Julia, and regards her as the mother of the girl to whom is addressed the poem entitled *Mr. Herrick: His Daughter's Dowry*. Julia is certainly the mistress who produces on our minds the greatest impression of reality, and we may therefore consider her first. If she elude our grasp, we may dismiss the remaining mistresses of classic name as airy nothings, without further comment. The poet mentions Julia in some sixty poems of the *Hesperides*, and confesses that of his 'many dainty mistresses' she is 'prime of all.' From her he takes affectionate leave before starting on his voyage—the voyage was probably that to the Isle of Rhé in 1626; he bids her burn his poems if he shall at his death leave them unperfected, and upon her he lays other solemn charges, if she shall outlive him.

"Yet with all this sincerity of utterance and semblance of reality, it is not at all certain that Julia is anything more than a poetic fiction. Though she is celebrated in poem after poem, she leaves upon the mind a very shadowy impression. We hear much of the ruby redness of her lips, the 'candour' of her teeth, the perfumes she exhales and the clothes she wears; but when we try to form a conception of her as a real woman we fail. There are, too, strange inconsistencies in what the poet tells us of her. Often enough she appears as a light o' love, and is addressed in language which is grossly sensual; but in the curious poem, *Julia's Churching, or Purification* (898), she comes before us as a chaste matron, making her way to church with her monthly nurse! But what strikes us most in the love-poems to Julia and her rivals is the complete absence of anything like incident or drama. There is no development in the

poet's amours, no inrush of hot jealousy, no satiety, no quarrelling, no reconciliation. The poet, in spite of his fourteen mistresses, has no rivals who seek to rob him of his love. We have, indeed, only to compare, in this respect, Herrick's mistress poems with those of other poets in whose case we know that the love and the loved ones are real, in order to appreciate this difference. Catullus's love for Lesbia can be traced exactly through its different steps—passionate yearning, full fruition, disillusionment and jealousy, ending in bitter loathing—and something like this dramatic development is found in some of the love-poetry of Elizabethan poets—for instance, in the love-elegies of Donne. Is it not, too, the presence of this dramatic development which makes the story of Shakespeare's sonnets seem so real? But of all this there is nothing in the *Hesperides*. The poet loves and is loved. His placid, passionless mistresses accept his gallant advances in silence and appear to him in his dreams; they fall sick and recover; they object to his grey hairs, but crown his head with roses; they find him growing old and infirm, but love him none the less. And all this applies to Julia just as much as to any of the other mistresses. He entreats her to close his eyes when death overtakes him, and follow him with tears to the grave; but he asks Perilla to perform the same service for him, and forgets that the presence of two such rivals at a clergyman's bedside and tomb might be a cause of scandal."

The indentification, or what is even less difficult, the mere establishment in fact of Julia and her fellow-charmers, remains one of the unsolved problems of the life, kindred in character with, as insoluble, though of distinctly less moment than the problem that sets traps for us in Shakespeare's sonnets.

With regard to the more purely critical part of the book, I have again nothing but praise for Professor Moorman's treatment of his subject. He has worked out much more completely and more satisfactorily than any preceding essayist the essential characteristics of Herrick's talent, and where discipleship required to be indicated, he has traced relationships and dependences with equal skill and scholarship. Indeed, so correct and moderate withal is he in his opinions, that I have no justification

or excuse for amplifying this article by the advancement of contrary views, and conclude with a hearty commendation of the volume.

PELHAM EDGAR.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN : What is it and how we enter it. By the Rev. G. H. S. Walpole, D.D., Rector of Lambeth and Examining Chaplain to the Archbishop of York. London: Elliot Stock. 1909.

Two important series of lectures have been delivered at the General Theological Seminary on the Bishop Paddock foundation during the past two years, both of which have appeared in book form. One of these books, entitled *Evolution and the Fall*, by Professor Francis J. Hall, D.D., will be reviewed in a subsequent issue. The present series of lectures, entitled *The Kingdom of Heaven*, was delivered in the spring of 1909 by Dr. Walpole, who until recently was rector of Lambeth, and last June was consecrated as Bishop of Edinburgh. Dr. Walpole held the chair of Dogmatic Theology in the General Theological Seminary in New York, from 1889 to 1896, and is well known both in this country and in England as a writer on religious subjects. Of deeply spiritual nature, his mind moves naturally and freely in the region of Scriptural truth; his eyes are open to the great realities of the world of the Unseen. These characteristics of mind and heart find abundant scope as the author deals with the great subject of the Kingdom of Heaven.

This conception has at different periods in the history of Christianity been successively identified with (1) the vision of an Apocalyptic future, (2) the empirical Church as a quasi-political organization, and (3) the idea of a perfected human social order. Each of these interpretations in turn Dr. Walpole finds inadequate to the expression of the full content and meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven. What, then, is the true interpretation of this great theme of our Lord's teaching; of this Kingdom which He came on earth to establish? "We are led to the conclusion that by the Kingdom of Heaven we mean a realm, principality or dominion in the heavenly sphere; and it is the Kingdom of God as being that over which God rules" (pp. 15, 16). "The